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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAMA 001409

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARPI, IO/UN/P  
USUN FOR ECOSOC AMB. SIV AND AMB. KENNEDY

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TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BA](#) [ECOSOC](#) [UNGA](#)  
SUBJECT: USUN AMBASSADOR SIV VISIT - 59TH UNGA  
PRECONSULTATIONS

REF: USUN 1955

Classified By: DCM Susan L. Ziadeh for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) On September 7, US Ambassador to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and Coordinator of the US delegation to the UN General Assembly Sichan Siv met with GOB officials and parliamentarians to discuss the United States' five UN General Assembly priorities (Reftel).

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Reducing Middle East Resolutions  
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2. (C) Ambassador Siv stated that there is a need to reduce the number of one-sided Middle East resolutions, and cited four resolutions that deal with Israel. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammed Abdul Ghaffar responded that Bahrain will not support this initiative. The Minister views the Palestinian issue as a core problem for the region and believes that the focus of the UNGA on Palestinian issues is appropriate. He objected to getting rid of resolutions just because they are considered one-sided and in favor of Palestine. Several Shura Council members echoed Abdul Ghaffar's point of view. But in a separate meeting, MFA A/US for Political Affairs and International Cooperation Ahmed Al Haddad offered to discuss this initiative further when Bahrain's delegation arrives in New York later this month for UNGA. Ambassador Siv offered to put Al Haddad in contact with Ambassador Kennedy at USUN.

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Advancing Economic Freedom - Beyond the Monterrey Consensus  
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3. (C) Ambassador Siv praised Bahrain for its economic performance and explained that the focus of the US initiative is advancing economic freedom by increased mobilization of domestic resources in the private sector. MFA Director of the International Directorate Ghassan Shaiko said that the GOB was in support of discussing the US initiative but expressed concern that it did not address the role of donor countries. Al Haddad said that the economic growth of developing countries should be viewed as a partnership between nations. Ambassador Siv offered to arrange for more discussions for Al Haddad in New York.

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Combating Trafficking-in-Persons  
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4. (C) Both Abdul Ghaffar and MFA A/US for Coordination and Follow-up Shaikh Abdul Aziz stated that the GOB supports any initiative that helps combat trafficking-in-persons, especially child sex tourism. Shaikh Abdul Aziz informed Siv that Bahrain does not have a teenage sex tourism problem, but does encounter foreign worker abuse. He stated that the GOB has undertaken several measures to combat trafficking-in-persons but admits that there are areas that still need improvement. As chairman of the GOB's inter-ministerial committee, he plans to establish a victim assistance shelter and suggest ways to speed up the judicial process. He added that Bahrain has a MEPI-funded American Bar Association judicial reform project that is tackling case management and alternative dispute resolution to speed up court decisions. Shaikh Abdul Aziz also mentioned that the GOB is drafting a new labor law and he is pursuing legislation that specifically criminalizes trafficking.

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Promoting Democracy - The Democracy Caucus  
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5. (C) Abdul Ghaffar said that the GOB supports measures that increase cooperation among democratic countries. In 2002, he attended the second ministerial conference of the Community of Democracies in Seoul, which produced the Democracy Caucus. The Minister expressed interest in attending the 2005 ministerial conference in Santiago.

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16. (C) Abdul Ghaffar said that the GOB has not made a final decision with regard to the Costa Rica resolution. In a subsequent meeting, former UN ECOSOC Vice President and MFA official Jassim Mohammed Buallay explained that the GOB will conduct internal discussions on this issue, focusing on the ministries of Islamic Affairs and Health. He added that cloning is an especially sensitive issue because of the religious and medical dimensions.

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